

Connecticut Youth Suicide Prevention Initiative (CYSPI) Meeting Minutes

January 16, 2007

Connecticut Association of Foster and Adoptive Parents

Rocky Hill, CT

8:30 – 10:00 AM

In Attendance: Allison Case, DMHAS; Andrea Duarte, DHMAS; Amy James, UCHC; Susan Moores, United Way; Allyson Nadeau, CT Behavioral Health Partnership; Bill Turek, SDE; and Faith Vos Winkel, Office of the Child Advocate

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Bill Turek (SDE) reported that 100 counseling staff and teachers within the state's technical high school system participated in a full-day of SOS training in October provided by Screening for Mental Health (SMH).

Andrea and Amy attended CMHS training in December in Bethesda. Training agenda and 2 PowerPoint presentations were distributed as handouts, all underlined presentations on the agenda are available on-line. Andrea reported there was some discussion of connecting the initiative with the deaf community and translating (signing) of materials. She plans to discuss addition of subtitles to SMH's SOS video.

Wisconsin is issuing an RFA. Tribal communities are working through cultural issues and see transportation as a potential obstacle to participation.

Active Parental Consent

Andrea did not hear that resistance to/for parental consent was a factor in projects across the country at the conference. Bill said he would be shocked/surprised if resistance was encountered within the tech HS system as they are governed by a "hands off" board and plan to incorporate the consent into their handbook distribution procedure. Amy reported that the need for active parental consent will change the process as UCHC's prior research projects did not require. The consent issue in effect stalled DC's effort.

In Oklahoma, significant resistance has been raised by the Scientology community. Per Amy, Scientologists do not believe in mental health issues or services and feel that screening leads to diagnosis, treatment, and these treatments/prescriptions lead to suicide. Their primary focus is to distract and delay. Andrea reported that Connecticut has 2 Scientologists participating on the Mental Health Transformation grant work groups. And in Connecticut, two groups, The Commission on Human Rights and Able Child are both Scientologist organizations.

Contracts

Andrea reported that all contracts have been drafted for 3 years with IRB reciprocity and UCHC will act as lead. DMHAS and UCHC IRB are still awaiting a required certification letter from the translation service for approval. Per Amy, some language was changed based on feedback

from vo-tech schools. Plain language and the terms investigation or study have been used in place of research. One form will satisfy both consent and HIPPA requirements.

St. Francis's Human Service Agreement is back at DMHAS for signature and execution. They will receive half of the monies up-front and the remainder monthly or quarterly. Andrea reports that they should be in the interviewing stage for the 2 counseling staff connected with this arm of the project, one each at Quirk Middle and St. Francis. Faith Vos Winkel who participates on the Project Advisory Board at St. Francis, reported they are looking at a bilingual, psychologist-level woman for the position at the clinic and a LCSW at the school. Andrea and Amy are meeting with St. Francis on January 24 regarding final consent on IRB and protection of Quirk data. At present, St. Francis wants to "cover" only students seen at St. Francis. UCHC IRB will not accept responsibility for per Amy. A contingency plan is to have DMHAS's IRB cover per Andrea, but St. Francis is contractually obligated to cover. Faith believes St. Francis may not understand the issue (and it may be skirted if a St. Francis employee is placed at Quirk in lieu of a school-based contractor)

College contracts are currently being reviewed.

DCF's contract will be ready in the next few days for DCF review.

High School Recruitment

Hartford: Participation delayed. Lea Fickner, the contact person for the school system recently informed Andrea that with the new superintendent, involvement in all pending grant-funded projects is essentially on hold. They did however draft a letter of interest for UCHC's NIH-grant. Amy is concerned that this delay may jeopardize data collection at Quirk. The reality is if we are not collecting data in 3 weeks at Quirk, we will not be collecting data this year.

Meriden: Not interested. Andrea and Amy met with the Superintendent and a teacher pilot tested the curriculum with a physical education class. Feedback was that the materials repeat topics already covered. Meriden does not use a particular curriculum but a series of pieced-together materials.

A discussion regarding how to best showcase that participation in this project gives schools the opportunity and access to evidence-based materials proven to reduce suicidality. Amy mentioned school administrators have had at best a lukewarm response. Previously she has contacted school mental health professionals with outstanding results. Bill has also found this strategy effective. A question was raised as to what the best point of entry is for recruitment on this project, administrators (current approach), physical education and health teachers, or counselors.

Technical High Schools: Andrea reported that she and Amy will attend a meeting with Bill Turek, Scott Newgass and the Superintendent of the Connecticut's Technical High Schools on Friday, January 19 to discuss participation in project. If SOS is adopted at the system level, targets for both schools and students required by grant (15 schools, 2100 students) would be fully met. Following a positive discussion, a "no-brainer" per Faith, the sub-committee approved this strategy. Amy commented this strategy will change the demographics of the study population to

include more males who are at a higher risk for completing suicide. Bill stated that the system includes representation from all racial and ethnic groups imaginable and is approximately 40% female. The only demographic group that would be under-represented is high SES. He also anticipates consent materials will need to be translated into Polish.

Other

Amy reported that the College Response data collection piece is ready to go and believes that UCHC's IRB will see this information as non-data (agency level census and demographic figures).

Amy also reported on an NIH grant application that UCHC's Institute for Public Health Research is assembling for February. The proposed 3-year longitudinal study would examine implementation of SOS at 40 high schools statewide and included a stipend of \$500/year for each site coordinator. Following a mailing co-signed by DMHAS Commissioner Thomas Kirk and Principal Investigator Dr. Aseltine, many schools with no prior experience with SOS have expressed interest. SDE is also supporting.

Meeting Schedule

The subcommittee will continue to meet monthly for now/during start-up and will precede the CYSAB meetings that occur every other month, generally on the 3rd Tuesday.

February 20 (tentative, subcommittee only) – 8:30 AM – location?
March 20 (CYSAB)
April 17 (anticipated)

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Handouts: agenda, budget, draft MOA DMHAS and Public Schools, at Risk Suicide Prevention Grantee Technical Assistance Meeting December 12-14, 2006 agenda, What will it take to change the world? presentation; Suicide prevention initiatives at SAMHSA presentation.